

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NRC-05 CIAE-00 H-01 INR-10
IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 TRSE-00 NSC-05 EB-08 /107 W
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TO SECSTATE WAHSDC 2820
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0240

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS:PARM NATO MBFR
SUBJ: MBFR: BILATERAL DISCUSSION WITH SOVIETS ON NEW WESTERN
INITIATIVE OF APRIL 17, 1978

US REP MADE FOLLOWING REPORT TO AD HOC GROUP ON
APRIL 19, 1978:

1. ON APRIL 17, US REP AND DEP REP HAD BILATERAL DISCUSSION
WITH SOVIET REPS TARASOV AND SHUSTOV AT SOVIET INVITATION.
TARASOV REQUESTED US REP TO GIVE HIS IMPRESSION OF THE PAST
ROUND. US REP SAID IT HAD BEEN VERY USEFUL. ITS MOST
IMPORTANT ASPECT WAS THAT THE WEST HAD PUT DOWN ITS NEW
INITIATIVE. THE TIMING OF THIS ACTION HAD BEEN MADE POSSIBLE
BY EAST/WEST AGREEMENT ON HOW TO EXCHANGE ADDITIONAL DATA.
DISCUSSION OF THIS DATA HAD PROCEEDED IN A BUSINESSLIKE WAY.

2. US REP SAID THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT HE WOULD LIKE TO
MAKE ABOUT THE NEW INITIATIVE WAS THAT IT MEANT AN IMPORTANT
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CHANGE IN THE NEGOTIATING SITUATION BECAUSE IT INCLUDED A
PROPOSAL FOR BINDING WESTERN COMMITMENTS ON THE TIMING AND
AMOUNT OF WESTERN EUROPEAN REDUCTIONS. THE WESTERN EUROPEANS
HAD MADE A POLITICAL DECISION IN DECIDING ON THIS MAJOR CHANGE
FROM THEIR EARLIER POSITION THAT THEY WOULD UNDERTAKE NO
SPECIFIC REDUCTION COMMITMENTS UNTIL AFTER INITIAL SOVIET
REDUCTIONS.

3. TARASOV SAID WHAT WAS NOW PROPOSED WAS STILL NOT A SPECIFIC COMMITMENT. IT MEANT ONLY THAT THERE WOULD BE SOME PARTICIPATION OF THESE PARTICIPANTS, WHETHER SYMBOLIC OR WITH ONE SOLDIER, IN PHASE II REDUCTIONS, BUT MERELY THAT THEY WOULD PARTICIPATE IN REDUCTIONS, WITHOUT ANY INDICATION OF EXTENT.

4. US REP SAID THE WESTERN PROPOSALS DID MEAN A BIG CHANGE BECAUSE, PREVIOUSLY, EASTERN PARTICIPANTS COULD NOT HAVE CERTAINTY AS TO WHETHER THERE WOULD IN FACT BE WESTERN EUROPEAN REDUCTIONS BECAUSE THEY COULD NOT HAVE CERTAINTY AS TO WHETHER PHASE II WOULD HAVE A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME. NOW, A BINDING COMMITMENT WAS BEING PROPOSED. NOW THAT THIS HAD BEEN DONE, THE CRITICAL ISSUE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE TALKS WAS HOW THE SOVIET UNION RESPONDED. IN THIS SENSE, THE WESTERN INITIATIVE WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO MOVE THE TALKS INTO A DECISIVE PHASE.

5. TARASOV POINTED OUT THAT UNDER THE NEW WESTERN PROPOSALS, THE ISSUE OF ARMAMENT REDUCTIONS FOR THE WESTERN EUROPEANS COULD BE DISCUSSED IN PHASE II BUT COULD NOT BE SOLVED, THAT WAS EVIDENT. US REP SAID THIS WAS NOT NECESSARILY THE CASE. THE OUTCOME OF THE DISCUSSION OF PHASE II TOPICS DEPENDED ON THE IMPETUS GIVEN BY A SUCCESSFUL PHASE I AGREEMENT AND ALSO ON THE CONTENT OF ACTUAL PROPOSALS AT THAT TIME.

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6. US REP SAID THAT A PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF THE DISAGGREGATED DATA LED HIM TO CONCLUDE THAT THE TWO SIDES MUST BE IN SOME AREAS APPLYING IN A DIFFERENT MANNER THE AGREED DEFINITION OF ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY MANPOWER. US REP SUGGESTED THAT THE EAST REVIEW ITS APPLICATION OF THE DEFINITION. TARASOV ASKED WHETHER US REP HAD IN MIND THAT PARTICIPANTS SHOULD TURN TO A DISCUSSION OF DEFINITIONS. US REP SAID HE DID NOT OPPOSE THIS, BUT WHAT HE HAD IN MIND PRIMARILY WAS A QUESTION OF REVIEW BY THE EAST OF ITS APPLICATION OF THE DEFINITION.

7. TARASOV QUESTIONED PARTICULARLY THE DEMAND FOR THE REDUCTION OF 68,000 SOVIET SOLDIERS, ASSERTING THAT IT WAS

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BASED ON THE WESTERN THEORY OF DISPARITIES DESPITE THE FACT
THAT FINAL AGREEMENT ON DATA WAS STILL LACKING. US REP
DEFENDED THE DEMAND ON THE BASIS THAT EVEN IF AGREEMENT ON
DATA WERE REACHED ON A LOWER FIGURE THAN THE WEST CURRENTLY
BELIEVED WAS CORRECT, THE EFFECT WOULD BE TO REDUCE THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR EASTERN REDUCTIONS IN PHASE II AND SHOULD NOT
AFFECT PHASE I.

8. US REP REPEATED THE REASONS WHY A DECISIVE MOVE BY THE
SOVIETS WAS NOW NECESSARY. TARASOV SAID HE HAD LISTENED TO
US REP'S VIEWS WITH CLOSE ATTENTION AND THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD
MAKE A SERIOUS STUDY OF THE NEW WESTERN PROPOSALS. BUT THE
WEST SHOULD NOT BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIETS COULD ACCEPT THEM
IN TOTO AS A BASIS OF A REDUCTION AGREEMENT.

9. TARASOV SAID HE WISHED TO TURN TO THE MANNING LEVEL
ISSUE. ON THIS POINT, HE WISHED TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT
FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF CLARIFYING THE EASTERN APPROACH.
FIRST, THE PERCENTAGE OF THE MANNING LEVEL OF THE SOVIET

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GROUND FORCES WHICH EASTERN PARTICIPANTS WERE PREPARED TO
PRESENT IN THE TALKS WOULD BE CALCULATED ON THE BASIS OF THE
OVERALL TOTAL OF POSITIONS ENVISAGED BY THE TABLE OF
ORGANIZATION OF ALL SOVIET FORMATIONS, UNITS AND SUBUNITS IN
THE REDUCTION AREA IN PEACETIME.

10. TARASOV SAID THAT THE SECOND POINT WAS THAT, IN THE CASE

OF THE GROUND FORCES OF THE GDR, POLAND AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, THE PEACETIME TABLE OF ORGANIZATION STRENGTH FOR EACH OF THESE COUNTRIES CONSISTS OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF POSITIONS IN ALL UNITS WHICH ARE MANNED IN PEACETIME AT LEAST BY A CADRE, AND THAT IT DOES NOT INCLUDE THE POSITIONS IN UNITS WHICH WOULD COME INTO BEING ONLY UNDER WARTIME MOBILIZATION.

11. TARASOV SAID THE THIRD POINT WAS THAT, IN THE CASE OF THE GROUND FORCES OF THE GDR, POLAND AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, THE FIGURES ON MANNING LEVELS OF THESE FORCES WHICH THE EAST WAS PREPARED TO PRESENT WOULD REPRESENT FOR EACH OF THESE COUNTRIES A PERCENTAGE OF THE OVERALL TOTAL OF POSITIONS CONTAINED IN THE TABLES OF ORGANIZATION OF ALL FORMATIONS, UNITS AND SUBUNITS ESTABLISHED FOR PEACETIME.

12. TARASOV CONTINUED EASTERN REPS ATTACHED IMPORTANCE TO THE DATA EXCHANGE ON AMNNG LEVELS, NOT BECAUSE THEY WISHED TO TABLE MORE DATA AS SUCH, BUT BECAUSE EASTERN PARTICIPANTS PROCEEDED FROM THE FACT THAT ONE OF THE REASONS EXPLAINING A DIVERGENCE IN FIGURES COULD BE--HE WISHED TO EMPHASIZE THE PHRASE COULD BE--AN INCORRECT WESTERN IDEA OF THE MANNING ELVEL OF EASTERN FORCES. EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES CONSIDERED THAT THEIR ESTIMATE OF THE STRENGTH OF WESTERN FORCES COULD ALSO BE BASED ON AN IMPRECISE UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR MANNING LEVEL. IF EXCHANGE OF THESE MANNING LEVEL FIGURES COULD HELP PARTICIPANTS TO MAKE THEIR ESTIMATES MORE ACCURATE, IT WOULD
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BE HELPFUL. IF IT DID NOT HELP PARTICIPANTS ON THIS ISSUE, THEN IT COULD BE PUT ASIDE AND DROPPED.RESOR

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